

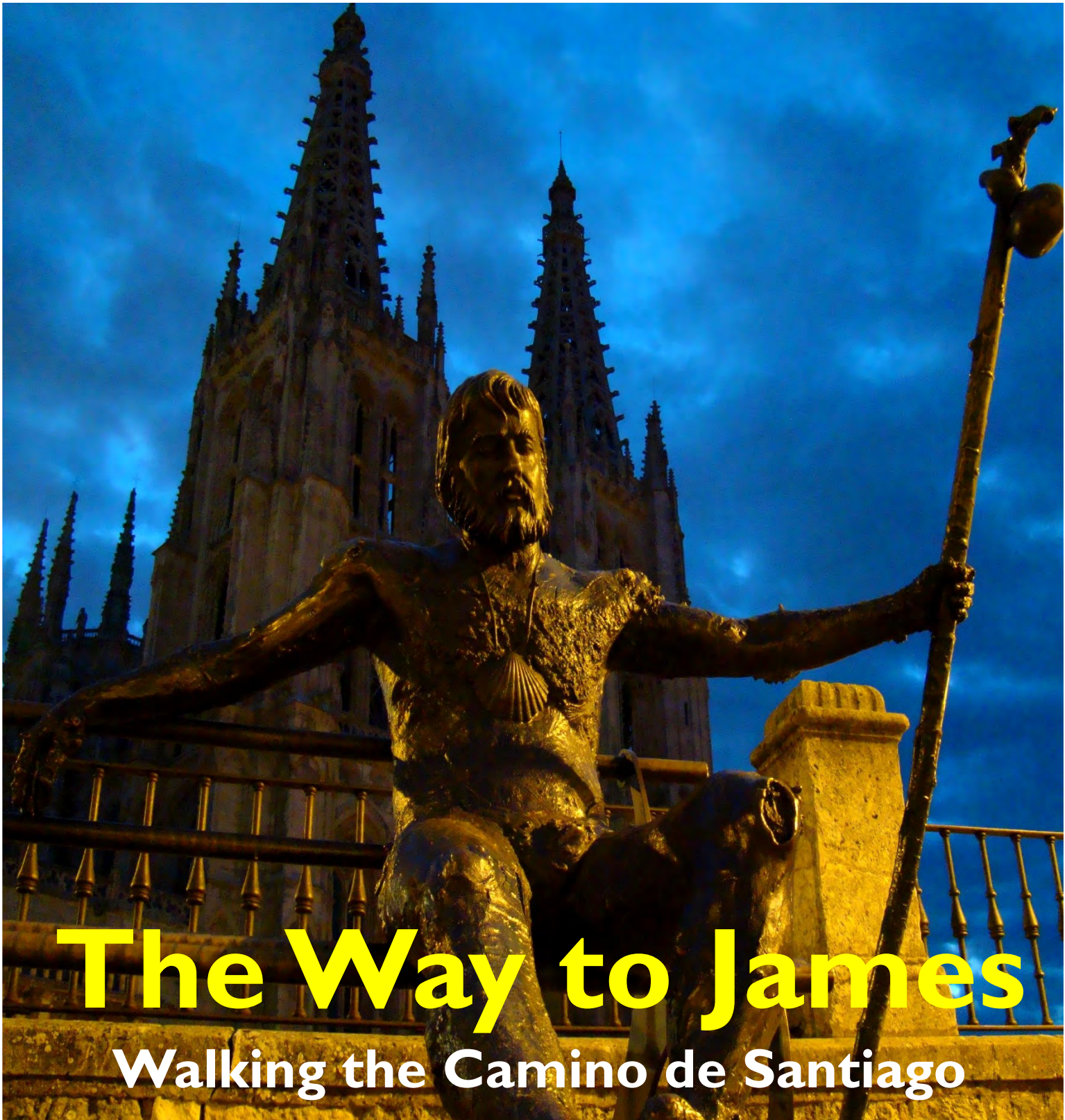
JULY 2018

# SPIRE



HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

YOUR FREE COPY



## The Way to James

Walking the Camino de Santiago

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# Multi-use church that throws open its doors



**DEREK WINTERBURN**

**F**or many people the picture that comes to mind when they hear the word 'church' is of a large, old building with a closed door. Once places of worship were universally regarded as sacred, and could be kept unlocked.

Sadly, in towns and cities that is no longer true and unscrupulous people will enter to steal or damage what is inside. Fifteen years ago, the desire to be inviting or open led St James's to install glass doors onto St James's Road, and to site the office there so that the church could be accessible for much of the week. Nevertheless for many people, a closed door (even if a glass door) is a barrier.

### Many reasons to enter a church

It is good to have such a variety of opportunities to welcome visitors into the building. Most obviously there are guests at baptisms, weddings and funerals - some of whom may never have been inside a church before.

Then there are the hundreds of children who visit from schools, either as part of the curriculum, or for a Christmas concert. Similarly the Scouts and Brownies, who visit as an element of their programme.

Music is another draw, either for the local Rock Choir, who come every



Wednesday, or for various concerts.

The building is of interest in many ways other than as a religious place. St James's is one of the oldest (and largest) structures in Hampton Hill. Arguably it is home to the largest collection of 'public art' in the neighbourhood; chiefly the range of beautiful stained glass.

It is also a venue for entertainment, with our increasingly popular Pop-up Cinema. The organ and bells are worthy of a hearing. A visitor climbing the tower is granted superb 360 degree views.

Then of course it is of interest as a church, a place of worship for 16 decades, Sunday by Sunday, or for key moments in people's lives.

### An open church to view

On Saturday 30 June, the church will be especially open to all visitors. As well as the annual opportunity to ring the bells, and see the views from the Spire there will be other items of interest including an organ recital at 2pm, refreshments and a film at 4pm (see column on the right).

Sadly the church is not *always* unlocked. But it is 'open' when the office is staffed, or otherwise a key can be obtained from the vicarage. And then, of course, we have special 'hours of opening' on Sunday at 8am, 9.30am and 11am when visitors will be most welcome. No booking required!

**Pictured (from top): Hampton Hill Junior School's Christmas concert; two have-a-go bell-ringers at our open day; the panoramic views from the spire — remember to bring your binoculars!**



## Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8-8:30am

Parish Communion 9:30-10:30am (not 1 July)

Together at Eleven 11-11:35 am (not 1 July) followed by crafts and refreshments

1 July 11am-12:15pm St James's Day

## Mon-Fri

(but not Tuesdays)

Morning Prayer 9:15-9:40am

## Tuesdays

3, 17, 24, 31 July

Holy Communion 9:30-10:15 am

10 July

Holy Communion and Coffee 10-11:30 am (2nd Tuesday of month)

## Fairtrade Stall

Saturday 30 June 2-4 pm,

Sunday 5 August 10:30-11:30 am

## Ark Playgroup

Mondays 2, 9, 16 July 10:30 am-12:15 pm

Our weekly playgroup for toddlers and carers continues. £2 per family. The final date of the term will be a picnic in Bushy Park

## Connections

Tuesday 3 July 11am-12:30 pm

(1st Tuesday of month)

Our monthly session for older people with refreshments, games, crafts and exercises

## Life Groups 8 pm

Tuesday 3 July; Thursday 5 July

## Open to View

Saturday 30 June 2-4 pm

We invite the whole community to discover what we offer. There will be flower displays, an organ recital, a chance to climb the spire and ring the bells, take a church tour, and enjoy tea and cakes. There will also be a bottle tombola, a Traidcraft stall, and crafts for the children. Then, sit back and enjoy...

## Pop-up Cinema (FREE ENTRY)

4 pm *Swallows and Amazons* (U rating)

Four children dream of a holiday adventure. They are given permission to camp on their own on an island in the middle of a vast lake, but when they get there they discover they may not be alone... This is a story about survival, friendship and courage - one for all the family.

## St James's Day

Sunday 1 July 11 am-4 pm

The Revd Ben Lovell, vicar of St Mary's, Hampton, will preach at our service. This will be followed by a churchyard treasure hunt and a barbecue lunch and drinks. Then work it all

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Bishop Sarah's joyous welcome at St Paul's



**SARAH MULLALLY** was installed as Bishop of London, the 133rd appointment and of course, the first woman to hold this position, writes *Janet Taylor*.

I was fortunate to be in the congregation of a packed St Paul's Cathedral to witness her installation.

I am left with memories that are a kaleidoscope of wonderful music, words and colour, solemnity and joyful affirmation.

These things stood out:

- The pomp and ceremony that accompanies major events at the cathedral; Church and City meeting as the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Masters of Livery Companies, Diocesan Clergy, and representatives of other Christian denominations and world faiths enter and process to their seats.
- Our first glimpse of the

Bishop as she is escorted by the Dean's procession from her entry through the great West Doors to the Quire, the hushed anticipation as she makes her Declaration of Assent and swears the Oaths of Allegiance and Due Obedience, before being anointed and taking her episcopal throne.

■ The calm, compelling tones of her address as she makes her personal commitment to the Church, the Diocese and the diverse peoples of London, echoing the charge given to her by the Archbishop of Canterbury on her election two months ago.

Unusually, Bishop Sarah was escorted back to the West Door in silence. The doors were flung wide and standing on the Portico she blessed the City and the Diocese as a steel band erupted into joyous celebration.

### Next phase of improvements underway

**THE FIRST** major renovation work to the hall begins at the end of July. Wall-mounted radiators will replace the current heating system. There will also be new flooring for the main hall and hallway. Phase two will see the toilets upgraded and the carpet on the stairs and in the Upper Room will be replaced.

■ The lighting in the tower has been improved. Existing lamps have been replaced with low-energy LED lights, which also act as emergency lighting should the power fail.

■ A newly-formed Church Development Team will this month begin their review of the building, visiting other churches for good ideas.

### Good result from first Ofsted inspection



**TURING HOUSE** School has been judged *Good with Outstanding features* in its first Ofsted inspection. The report said: 'Leaders, governors and staff have turned their dream of creating a successful school into a reality.'

## FEATURE: WALKING TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

# A pilgrim on



LIZ WILMOT

I was introduced to the Camino a few years ago when my daughter-in-law suggested we watch the film *The Way*, starring Martin Sheen. It was the story of a father who travelled to France after his son died during the walk. He decided to make the journey himself to understand his son.

It sowed a seed in my mind and I decided to walk *the Way* myself when I retired, so I enlisted three enthusiastic friends and, a few weeks ago, we walked some of the Camino.

The Camino de Santiago has existed for about a thousand years and from the early 12th century was ranked with Rome and Jerusalem as one of the great destinations of medieval pilgrimage. It brought pilgrims from all over Europe to the city of Santiago de Compostela, believed by many to be the final resting place of St James the Apostle. He is said to have visited Spain and preached the Gospel there before returning to Jerusalem where he died in the year 44.

#### Legend of James

Legend has it that St James's remains came to Galicia in a boat guided by angels, and were discovered in the year 814 by Bishop Theodemir who had been led by a star to the spot. He named the area 'Compostela' – from the Latin *Campus Stellae*, meaning 'Field of Stars'. A church was built on the site which we now know as Santiago de Compostela. Santiago is a version of San Yago, meaning Saint James.

The popularity of the Camino contributed greatly to the growth of towns and villages along the way. Churches, hospitals, bridges and roads were built for the pilgrims and the



**Every year thousands of people walk part or all of the 9th century Camino de Santiago, the Way of St James, which stretches for almost 800km through France and Spain to where he is said to be buried. Liz Wilmot and friends became modern day pilgrims along the well-trodden pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela**



The scallop shell symbol guides walkers all along the 800km (500 mile) route through France and Spain

# St James's way

## Around the Spire

### Clare's final day on kitchen duty

**CLARE RYAN**, who for the past seven years has been a much-loved face behind the hall kitchen hatch on Sundays, served up her final mug of coffee on Sunday 3 June.

Working alongside Kirstie Girling, Clare took Sunday refreshments to a new level.

Canon Julian Reindorp dubbed her 'Clare in the Community', recognising the



important role hospitality plays on Sunday mornings. She was presented with flowers, a book, voucher and card signed by the congregation. Julian is pictured with, from left: Clare, Jacky, our curate, and churchwarden Gwynneth. Clare is moving to Shropshire, where grandparent duties will keep her busy. She will, however, be back for face painting on St James's Day!



The Pilgrim's Mass is held every day at noon at the cathedral. Right: Liz and friends, inside, at the end of their walk.

towns flourished. Although the Camino has been walked for centuries, for many of those years it fell largely out of favour following the Reformation in Europe, the Plague, and various wars.

In 1978 a mere 30 pilgrims were recorded as arriving on foot in the city. In 1965, the organisation Friends of the Camino de Compostela was formed to make life easier for the small number of pilgrims who walked the route, providing clear waymarking and suitable accommodation.

UNESCO declared the trail a World Heritage Site, and in 1987 the Council of Europe named it a European Cultural Route. This was followed by a Papal visit in 1989 and since then the number of pilgrims has grown rapidly with over 300,000 recorded in 2017.

#### Taking the French Way

There are many different Camino routes, but over the past 30 years the Camino Francés (or the French way) has become the most popular, a journey of some 800km, starting in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port in southern France and crossing the Pyrenees into Spain, to the city of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia.

It takes 5-6 weeks to complete on foot. Most people carry their belongings in backpacks and camp, or stay in pilgrim hostels, or albergues, often attached to convents, where they sleep (or try to!) in large dormitories.

To qualify for the Compostela (the certificate issued in Santiago) you have to present your 'Pilgrim Passport' with official stamps to show that you have walked at least 100km. The stamps are available from all hotels, hostels, and cafes along the way.

We chose to go in late April to avoid the heat and the crowds, and opted to walk the final section from Sarria to Santiago, a distance of around 118km spread over six days, with all our private hotel rooms booked and our

luggage transported from hotel to hotel on a daily basis!

Leaving Sarria on our first morning we had a distance of around 22km to walk to Portomarin through beautiful countryside, very green and reminiscent of Wales, and through small hamlets, each with their own lovely little church.

#### The original souvenir

Our first priority was to buy a scallop shell each to establish ourselves as true pilgrims, and we found them readily available at shops and cafes all along the route. Most pilgrims carry one, usually attached to their backpacks these days, but they were originally worn on the pilgrim's hat.

The origin of the shell symbol is unclear, but dates from the Middle Ages. There are various theories as to its symbolism, including a representation of the setting sun in Finisterre (on the north west coast, considered by some to be the true end of the pilgrimage), or legends such as the Galician prince who fell into the sea and was covered in shells when pulled out by James. The shell appears everywhere along the route to guide you on your way, including on railings, walls and even manhole covers!

Galicia is green for a reason, but we were lucky with the weather walking mainly in beautiful sunshine.

#### Food and drink along the way

On the second day we walked 24km, getting the major part of the day's journey done before stopping for a late lunch outdoors. There are plenty of small cafes and albergues along the way serving good food and drinks. We soon discovered Tarta de Santiago, an almond cake, was served everywhere and went down a treat with a cup of coffee! Local beers are good too and the white wine Albariño, produced in Galicia, is both delicious and cheap.

We had decided to split day three's walk of 28km into two days of 14km, allowing us to recharge a little before day five's longer walk.

#### Arriving for the Pilgrim Mass

The Pilgrim Mass in Santiago Cathedral is held every day at noon and we wanted to arrive there as pilgrims, straight from our walk, so we rose very early on day six to walk the last 20km. We arrived in Santiago at 11.30, but it was 12.15 before we finally reached the cathedral. It was packed, with people sitting and leaning wherever they could, but we managed to get near to the altar.

The service is conducted mainly in Spanish, with a part in other languages to include all the pilgrims present. Following communion, the famous Botafumeiro (a very large incense burner which hangs from the centre of the cathedral) is lit and is swung vigorously around the cathedral.

In the Middle Ages when the tired and unwashed pilgrims arrived at the cathedral they would get as close as possible to the sacred relics and many spent the night there, praying and singing by candlelight. With hundreds there at once, the authorities invented the Botafumeiro, which apart from its ceremonial role, worked effectively to mask the smell of the pilgrims!

#### And at the end...

Did I find myself? No, but it was a wonderful experience and I will go again.

Right: Liz's certificate to mark her completing the walk



#### Cubs sowing seeds in the churchyard



**THERE HAS** been a flurry of activity in the churchyard recently. Although the local council are responsible for cutting the grass, we want to make the area a haven for wildlife. Teams of volunteers have been planting shrubs by the West Door and clearing ground for wildflower seeds. The 3rd Hampton Cubs came out in force to create a mini-meadow and homes for bees.

#### A big thank you to everyone!

Thank you to everyone who supported Christian Aid Week, particularly organisers Elizabeth Wilmot and Linda Webb. We raised £3733, £80 up on 2017.



#### Circle of love in Devon

**AFTER 20 YEARS** of the most special friendship, Sara Butterfield, daughter of Val and Mike, married Christopher Dawson at St Mary's Church, Dartington, Devon on Saturday 19 May. Their son, Ambrose, had a central role, as a page boy, ring bearer and soloist.



Sara's father Mike read during the service. Six small flower girls joined Ambrose and Sara's Malawian godson Ivan to sing *The Seeds of Friendship*. The ceremony was followed by a reception at Dartington Hall, featuring live classical and African music. A ceilidh rounded off the night. The next day, friends and family joined the couple aboard a boat, sailing down the Dart Estuary to Greenway, Agatha Christie's woodland home, for a musical picnic. Two weeks later, there were further celebrations in France, with a party for 50 on Lake Anney. In August, they will honeymoon in Asturias, in northern Spain.



**KAREN ROACH**

The club runs **Wed 29-Fri 31 August**

St James's is offering an exciting three-day club for Primary school-aged children (that's Years 1-6 in September 2018).

The morning starts at 10 and finishes at 12.30, with light refreshments in the middle. During the sessions there will be games, stories, songs, craft and fun!

Centring on some key Bible characters, we will explore what life is like on God's team.

It costs just **£5 per family**

The cost for the 3 days is £5 per family. We would encourage children to do all three mornings, but if that is not possible then individual days can be booked.

If you would like to book a place please contact me, Karen Roach, Children and Families' Worker, for a registration form.

You can phone 074 7110 1487, or email [karen.roach@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk](mailto:karen.roach@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk) I hope to see you at the club!

**SUMMER IS HERE** and that will soon mean an end to the school year! Six weeks or more of holidays lie ahead. For the lucky ones that will mean some of it spent on a family break in the UK or abroad. But we all know how boredom can kick in when we have exhausted our games and read all our books.

While for children the summer holiday seems an almost eternal release from school life, parents might not think of them as unremitting bliss!

Everyone gains from a change of pace, and perhaps a change of scenery. This year, we can offer a little distraction at the end of the holiday break!

**Scripture Union**  
**TEAMBUILDERS**  
A SCRIPTURE UNION HOLIDAY CLUB PROGRAMME

**Wed 29-Fri 31 August 10am-12.30pm**  
**Fitz Wygram Church Hall**  
**Booking is now open**



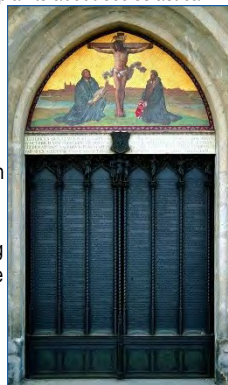
Wittenberg's main square



**LAURENCE SEWELL**

**W**ittenberg would have remained an unremarkable town on the banks of the River Elbe in what is today the State of Saxony-Anhalt in north Germany, but for the beliefs and actions of a German monk half a millennium ago.

Last year, the world celebrated the 500th anniversary of the day (31 October 1517) Martin Luther is said to have nailed his 95 'theses', or complaints about ecclesiastical corruption and the selling of indulgences by the church, to the door of the All Saints' Castle Church in Wittenberg, pictured, thereby inspiring events that were seen (together with other theological movements) as the beginnings of the Protestant Reformation.



**Luther in Wittenberg**

Luther had come to Wittenberg at the invitation of Frederick III, the Elector of Saxony (known as Frederick the Wise) who had earlier established a university in Wittenberg in 1502. He was a great patron of philosophy and the arts, and appointed Luther as a professor of Biblical Studies in

1512. Through his studies and religious convictions Luther became critical of several of the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. Central to his theological thinking were three beliefs based on *sola* – the Latin word for alone: *sola fida* meaning that one is saved by faith in Jesus alone, not by what you do; *sola gratia*, that this faith is not earned but is freely given; and *sola scriptura*, that this faith is based on Biblical authority and not on ecclesiastical traditions.

For such a committed thinker, it is not difficult to see that the practices and politics of the papacy and behaviour of the Church at that time were profoundly contrary to the 'pristine Gospel' in which he believed.

His actions in publicising his theses were a protest in particular against the sale of indulgences – the payment to the Church that exempted them from punishment for sins.

Luther wanted to save the Church not revolutionise it, although subsequent events and papal intransigence were to lead to a 'Protestant reformation'. Frederick III provided protection for Luther at his castle in Wartburg after he was excommunicated by Pope Leo X, and it was here that Luther translated the Bible into German.

**Subsequent history**

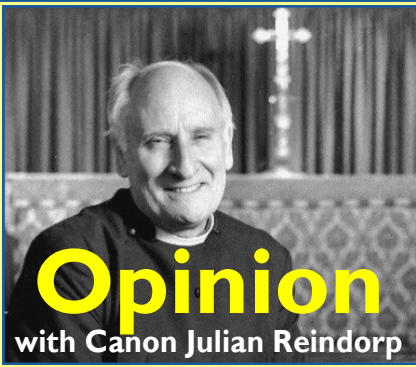
All Saints' Church, including the famous doors, was severely damaged in 1760 during the Seven Years War when the French bombarded the town, and again in 1814 when the Prussians stormed it. The Church was later restored and the wooden doors replaced in 1858 by bronze ones, engraved with the Latin text of Luther's theses, and inside the church is his tomb.

The town centre was spared allied bombing during World War Two; it became part of East Germany in 1949 until reunification in 1990.



The restored All Saints' Church as it now looks

Various sites in Wittenberg associated with Luther were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996. These include part of the Augustinian monastery which was Luther's home, and which is now a museum containing artefacts from his life; and the place outside the Elster Gate of the city where Luther publicly burned the papal bull declaring him a heretic and his excommunication in 1520 which is today marked by an oak tree.



**Opinion**  
with Canon Julian Reindorp

**POPE PLANS FUTURE**

Pope Francis recently announced the appointment of 14 new cardinals on 29 June, all 'pastoral shepherds' who know 'the smell of the sheep'. He has now appointed 59 of the 125 able to vote for his successor. This is succession planning on a major scale.

He has also faced two of the Catholic church's key challenges. Having first vigorously defended a Chilean bishop against the charge of protecting an abusing priest, after a full investigation he has admitted that he was wrong. He called all the Chilean bishops to the Vatican, and after a series of closed door meetings all 34 bishops offered their resignation.

As part of this process he met Juan Carlos Cruz, the principal Chilean sex abuse survivor. Cruz said he was gay, and the Pope reportedly replied, 'Juan Carlos, that you are gay does not matter. God made you like that and he loves you like that.' The Roman Catholic position has been that homosexual acts are unnatural, and that every sexual act must be 'open to the transmission of life'.

As *The Tablet*, the Catholic weekly, commented, 'Many priests and the majority of the laity are ahead of the Pope and long for the day when Catholic teaching on sex corresponds to their own experience of it, because then the Church will have listened to them at last.'

**TWO STATES NO MORE?**

On 14 May American viewers of cable news could watch on a split screen as the Israelis celebrated the new American embassy being opened in Jerusalem, and also the killing of 59 and the injuring of more than 2,000 Palestinians in Gaza as they demonstrated about their illegal blockade by Israel.

The UN has described the area where two million people live as 'unlivable'. Israel has continued to expand illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem where the now more than 800,000 settlers control 42% of what the UN describes as Palestinian land.

In view of the facts, can we continue to talk about 'the two-state solution', where Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and with some sense of justice?

**TESSA JOWELL**

Dame Tessa Jowell, who died recently from a brain tumour, aged 70, will be remembered for many reasons. Her final speech in the House of Lords about living in the face of imminent death received a standing ovation (not House of Lords' behaviour!) Her drive and commitment as a Labour Cabinet minister helped us to win the bid for the 2012 Olympics.

She launched the Sure Start programme in 1998 aimed primarily at less advantaged families, but open to anyone. Its 4,000 children's centres offered not just early learning and child care but advice for parents on job opportunities, training, health and child rearing. Sadly, since 2010 funding cuts, more than 1000 have been closed, many others open only part-time. Her death brought a host of tributes from friends across the political spectrum.

**SCIENCE AND RELIGION**

Very often international meetings of scientists are hosted at the Vatican with the guidance of the Jesuit cosmologist Guy Consolmagno. He wrote, 'God is the reason why existence itself exists. God is the reason why space and time and the laws of nature can be present for the forces that Stephen Hawking talked about to operate. What's more, I believe in such a God not because of the absence of any other explanation for the origin of the universe, but because of the person of Jesus Christ in history, in Scripture and in my own personal experience. And even more strongly, I have a faith in this God not merely because the universe exists, but it is beautiful and fun to play in...that play we call science.'

# A bold project to grow the church



**DEREK WINTERBURN**

One of our neighbouring parishes is St Richard's. That church serves an area which is partly in Richmond, partly in Hounslow. It is placed in the 15% most deprived communities in England, with high child poverty (30%) and lone parenthood (29%). 27% of adults of working age have no qualifications and pensioner poverty is much higher than the national average.

A church was built in Forge Lane in 1965 with a multi-purpose aspect so that it could serve as community resource and centre for a wide range of activities. Fifteen years ago the church was extended to create a large hall space; much of the building work was done by volunteers.

The premises are very well used by the church, a playgroup and activities for older people. In a typical week it is in use for 84 hours, with 660 individual visits.

The original church was built on a very tight budget and inevitably has begun to look tired, and serious design flaws have emerged. Then, five years ago the copper roof was stolen. Metal theft cannot be fully covered by insurance and the congregation had to find the money for temporary roofing.

St Richard's is facing a double-challenge: to make the church good enough for ongoing use and to develop the premises for future use by the community. Visionary plans make the building fully accessible, as well as upgrading the toilets and kitchen, re-fashioning the tower and new roofing.

The plans are ambitious and the church has worked hard at generating funds. The vicar, the Rev Craig Holmes, has been sponsored for long run after long run! The curate, the Rev Chris Kennedy, cycled from John O'Groats to Land's End.



**An artist's impression of the remodelled St Richard's Church**

So far the church has raised £380,000 towards the target of £1.5 million - remarkable for such a deprived area. While the final target still seems a long way off there is an immediate goal of sealing the roof as the 'temporary patching' wears out. Even that work will cost £300,000.

St Richard's is not just about the building - it is a lively church, with a remarkable children's ministry. In the summer their holiday club will attract up to 100 children.

Hampton Deanery is considering how it can help; for example there was a collection at the Deanery Service on Ascension Day; people gave almost £500.

St James's has supported *Project Grow* in the past and will continue to do so this year.



**The bright, open space inside will have multiple uses**



**Lesley Mortimer has retired after 16 years as the Widening Participation Officer at Brunel University, London. She brought a cake for us to share after the service on 10 June.**

**REGISTERS**

**MAY**

**BAPTISM**

**27 Aryeta Elora Rowanna Sanders, Hampton Hill**

**MARRIAGE**

**26 David Glyn Highton and Lisa Michelle Edith Mabel Kain, Teddington**

**FUNERALS**

- 4 Beatrice (Betty) James, 72, Hampton Hill**
- 8 Patricia Plunkett, 83, Hampton**
- 15 Irene Dorothy Rutter, 88, Kingston**
- 29 Maurice William Beaver, 87, Chiswick**

**INTERMENT OF ASHES**

- 28 Thilaka Hitchcock, 86, Chelsea**
- 28 Raymond Leathard, 89, Glasgow**



# The Bible and birdsong



**ROS DALY**

**T**he prophet Isaiah uses a bird to illustrate the experience of faith in God: 'Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles.' 40: 31. Other similar biblical imagery includes the dove: a bird that brought proof of land to Noah, a sign of peace and a symbol for Holy Spirit. In Luke 12: 6, Jesus uses sparrows, sold five for two pennies at market, to illustrate the depth of divine compassion: 'Yet not one of them is forgotten by God.'

Here are ten birds out of so many which bring me joy.

**Buzzard *Buteo buteo* 50–58cm** (Distance from bill tip to tail tip)



Our most common large bird of prey, almost lost during the 1950s myxomatosis epidemic, the buzzard soars on broad wings crying shrilly, *kyew*, as it scans the earth for anything that moves. Frequenting woods, moorlands, mountains, wild shores and farmland, the bird builds a bulky nest of sticks on cliffs or high in trees. The larger female dresses the nest with fresh greenery daily and will crouch over her young with out-stretched wings to shelter them in bad weather.

**Blackbird *Turdus merula* 25cm**

So familiar it is easily overlooked, except in late spring when the male bird, with orange beak and glossy feathers sings his sweet, melodious and enchanting song. He also gives a harsh *tch-tch-tch* call for danger and will persist until the threat is over. Young birds are brown, like the female and are fed by both parents for three weeks after fledging.



Seen on lawns hunting for worms, blackbirds also like windfalls, berries, bugs and slugs.

**Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* 58-66cm**

Hated for its ice cream-snatching bully-boy tactics on the promenade, the herring gull's loud, resonant, yodelling cry immediately conjures up the tang of brine, the rolling sea, the crash of waves and the wide,



dazzling white and soft grey, with a 30-year lifespan, it can eat almost anything organic, including rubbish, and is one of our most adaptable birds.

**Dunnock *Prunella modularis* 14.5cm**

Sometimes called a hedge sparrow the slender-beaked dunnock is not a sparrow at all but a sweet song-bird. Nesting in bushes



and hedges it hops and shuffles cautiously, alone or in pairs to seek seeds and insects on the ground in hedge bottoms, scrub and beds.

**Maggie *Pica pica* 45cm**

Love it or loathe it, the striking magpie is a highly intelligent predator, submissive only to the larger crow. Sexes alike, both weave a domed nest high in a tree before the spring sap rises and while the slenderest twigs are still winter-brittle and easy to snap from various branches. Both parents care for their offspring until September when the youngsters' tails become fully grown.



**Jay *Garrulus glandarius* 34cm**

Unlike the magpie, the equally clever jay builds its cupped nest after the leaves open. Preferring to remain hidden, its short, broad wings allow it to glide swiftly through trees and to closely skirt hedges and shrubberies, only giving its presence away with a short, raucous cry. Fond of acorns, it 'plants' them in autumn and usually remembers where most are hidden. Those it misses help to propagate woodlands.

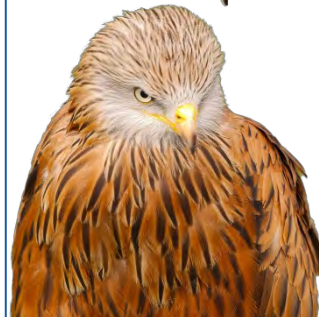


**Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* 12cm**

Nearly lost to the cage bird trade in the 19th century, goldfinches are increasing, particularly since the introduction of *niger* seed for garden feeders to supplement the thistle, teasel, dandelion and other wild seeds on which they feed. Collectively called a *charm*, the birds never fail to delight with their red cheeks, golden wing flashes and somewhat guttural, melodious cries.



**Kite *Milvus milvus* 60cm**



From only 20 or so pairs in Wales in the 1970s, the kite has made a remarkable recovery from persecution. Magnificent fliers, they can circle for hours on long, slender wings, uttering shrill, mewing calls and steering with long, forked tails while they hunt for weasels, stoats, rodents and carrion.

**Swift *Apus apus* 16.5cm**

Last to come and first to leave, its high screaming signals the arrival of summer. Unless it's on the nest, it stays aloft, feeding, sleeping and sometimes even mating on the wing. So air-bound its legs are virtually useless a swift never lands on the ground by choice.



**Robin *Erithacus rubecula* 14cm**

Contender for Britain's favourite bird, the robin is a welcome companion for gardeners, picking off pests as plants are clipped and soil is dug. The bird is territorial and fiercely aggressive to rivals.

In spring the courting male will feed the female choice titbits while she flits between perches.

Robins have a sweet, somewhat sad, warbling song in short refrains and often sing at night in summer.

The nest is built solely by the female but both parents care for the speckled young.

